Story of Old Ft. Harrison

SEP 1 1957

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

When the Indiana Territory was organized May 10th, 1800, there were only about 4,800 white people in all of this area, which at that time included parts of Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. But between 1810 and 1819 nearly 140,000 settlers streamed into this region. How many of you realize what an important part old Fort Harrison played in the moving forward of the western frontier?

Dorothy J. Clark

The seat of government was fixed at Vincennes, Indiana, and General William Henry Harrison was appointed governor of the Indiana Territory on May 13, 1800. He was able to purchase the Indian titles to three million acres of land. In turn the early settlers bought the land from the government and began to move into the new territory.

Due to this rapid influx of white settlers, the Indian tribes on the Wabash River were stirred up in opposition to the surrendering of their lands to the whites. Incited by Tecumseh and his brother, the Prophet, they entered into a confederacy against the white settlers.

Militia Called Out.

In July, 1811, the Secretary of Virginia authorized Gov. Harrison to call out the militia of the territory; also at his discretion to order Boyd's regiment of U. S. Infantry to proceed at once against Prophet's Town, at the mouth of Tippecanoe River. On the 26th of Sept., 1811, he set out on the march to the upper Wabash and on the 3rd of October, encamped on the east bank of the Wabash River some two miles north of the Indian village of Rising Sun, or Orchardtown, the future location of Terre Haute.

Gov. Harrison was delighted with the location, and next day proceeded to carry out his intention of erecting a fort. While the fort was being built Gov. Harrison received word from some friendly Indians that the Prophet's "Tomahawk was up against the whites—that nothing would induce him to take it down unless the wrongs of the Indian were redressed." On the night of Oct. 10th, some Shawnee Indians crept up on Harrison's camp and wounded one of his sentinels. On the 28th of October, 1811, the fort was completed.

Description of Fort.

The fort has been described as an "inclosure 150 feet square, a stockade of heavy timber. The two corners to the west were the blockhouses, forming the outer walls, and the eastern corners were bastions two stories high and projecting from the second story sufficiently to command the outside of the walls in two directions. These were pierced on each face with embrasures above and below to fire upon the enemy; and guard against an approach to set fire to the building. The western line towards the river was formed by the soldier's barracks, merely strongly built log huts. The entrance gate was on the east; on the north side was the guard house, and on the south side, the well and magazine; the stables, shed, etc., for the stock were on the north side." By the request of the officers, the fort was named after the General and called "Fort Harrison."

Col. James Miller, with a small garrison was left in command of the fort, and Harrison with a force of some 900 men, resumed his march towards Prophet's Town, and what was to be known as the famous Battle of Tippecanoe. This battleground is located near Lafayette, Ind., and is now a state park. After the battle Harrison's victorious army returned to Vincennes by way of Fort Harrison. It was this campaign of Harrison that opened up the Wabash Valley to the knowledge of the whole country. The soldiers carried home with them glorious accounts of the beauty of the Wabash Valley, the mildness of the climate, and the fertility of the soil. This started the great onrush of settlers into this part of the country.

Taylor Take Command.

In 1812 Capt. Zachary Taylor of the 7th U. S. Infantry was placed in command of the fort. He and most of his garrison were ill with malarial fever and unfit for duty. On Sept. 3rd, 1812, immediately after retreat-beating, four gunshots were heard by those in the fort from the direction where two men were known to be making hay, about 400 yards distant. The commander mistrusted the firing, and when the men failed to return to the fort that night, he was convinced they had been killed, but owing to the darkness he didn't send out to see until the next morning. About 8 o'clock a corporal with a few men were dispatched to look for them but to be watchful for an ambush. The squad soon returned with the bodies that had been scalped and shockingly mutilated.

Capt. Taylor left his sick bed and gave out warning that an Indian attack could be expected at any time, and to be prepared. Late on the evening of the 4th, an old chief, named "Lenar," with about 40 men, mostly chiefs of various tribes collected by the Prophet, came in sight of the fort bearing a white flag and an English-speaking Shawnee called out that Lenar wished to speak with Capt. Taylor in friendship, and that they would come the next morning to get provisions. This strategy was for the purpose of allaying suspicion of an

Community Affairs File

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

attack, but did not deceive Capt. Taylor. At retreat-beating that night he called out every man able to be out of bed and personally inspected each one to see that all was in good order, distributing 16 rounds of cartridges. The guard which, owing to sickness, had been but six men and two non-commissioned officers was now increased. Soon the sentinels began firing, and it was discovered that the Indians had set fire to the blockhouse on the southwest corner. They had started the fire in the holes that had been licked under the timbers by the cattle trying to reach the salt stored there. The flames soon reached the whiskey in the storeroom and raged even more fiercely.

Indians Pour It On.

Taylor ordered buckets of water brought from the well. A portion of the roof that joined the blockhouse was thrown off. When the only water supply, the well, began to fail, Julia Lambert offered to be lowered down into the well and filled the buckets with a gourd dipper. The Indians all the while poured in a heavy fire of ball and innumerable arrows. Despite the yells of the savages, the cries of the women and children, and the raging fire, Capt. Taylor gallantly managed to lead his men. Finally the fire was extinguished, the 18 foot gap in the fall was strongly replaced, and at 6 a. m. on Sept. 5th, the Indians withdrew. Before leaving however, they shot all the horses and hogs and drove off the cattle and oxen. In his official report, Capt. Taylor listed two killed and one wounded and "these by their own carelessness." He commended the role of the women who carried water, loaded the guns, tended the sick and wounded, etc.

Capt. Taylor sent for aid to Gov. Harrison twice; first by canoe, and the two men barely escaped with their lives; next, he sent two men overland through the forest, and they were successful. Aid came from Vincennes on Sept. 16th—1,200 men.

To better appreciate this heroic event, we must remember that Capt. Taylor had but 15 effective men, while Indian force was estimated at several hundred. After the battle, the heroes in the fort were in a distressing condition. Their stock was all gone, their provisions were destroyed by fire, nothing to eat, and hardly a hope of relief if the enemy should be reinforced and attack again. Gov. Harrison was so pleased with Capt Taylor that he recommended his promotion to brevet-major. This was the beginning of the rise that finally made this young officer President of the U. S. in 1848.

Frontier Guarded.

After the battle at Fort Harrison, a garrison was maintained, to guard the frontier if needed and transactions of the U.S. with the Indians were handled there. As the U.S. purchased more land from the Indians and as settlers moved in and the Indians went further west and north and there were no warlike incidents, it seemed unnecessary to maintain the garrison at the Fort and the garrison left in 1818. But the Fort continued to be used by the Indian Agent for making of treaties with the Indians for several years more. In 1822 the Fort ceased to be a military post.

Fort Harrison continued its usefulness as a boarding house for early settlers, and was the destination of all those who came by water. In the presidential campaign of 1838, many of the old logs were made into canes to be carried by those supporting Wm. H. Harrison for President. Some of the logs of the fort were worked into a one-story house, later covered by weahterboarding, which stood just at the rear of the place where the fort stood.

This Battle of Fort Harrison was very important. The Indian had fought to maintain the Wabash frontier and had lost. His days were numbered here. The victory was won for white settlers and civilization. Four years later Indiana became a state and Terre Haute was founded—both in 1816!

Fort Harrison Celebrates Fourth of July

6-29-58-T

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Terre Haute and Vigo county have had many Fourth of July celebrations, some more memorable than others, but one of the very earliest was at Fort Harrison in the year 1816.

I obtained permission from Miss Juliet Peddle to quote freely from a little book, "The Story of a Hoosier Immigration," written in 1904 by her grandmother, Mary Elizabeth Ball Peddle, and published by John Peckham in 1939. The illustrations are linoleum block cuts made by Miss Peddle, showing scenes of the flatboat journey and the route that was travelled.

The book describes how a few families, namely those of Joseph Richardson (the great-great grandfather of both Miss Peddle and Mr. Peckham), Major Markle, Daniel Stringham, the Harrises, the Webbs and the Redfords left New York State in 1816 to found new homes in the newly established state of Indiana. The writer, Mrs. Peddle, never expected her account to reach a printer, and intended it merely as a record for the family. Her mother was the "little Betty" who was six years old at the time of the journey west. Her grandmother was the heroic Mrs. Joseph Richardson, who due to her husband's illness had to make the journey alone with seven children from Pittsburgh to Indiana.

Dorothy J. Clark

" . . . the first week in June brought the travellers to the mouth of the Wabash, and harder and slower work. The boat now had to be pushed upstream against the current. There was no floating now and little rest for anyone. Every man and boy helped in some way. Those who were not using the poles assisted by what was called bushwacking. This could be done when the channel allowed the boats to run near the shore and under the overhanging branches of the trees. Persons on deck would take branch after branch in first one hand and then the other, pulling hard, and so lighten the labor of those who were poling . . .

Last Leg of Journey.

"They did not reach Vincennes until the third week of June . . . Fort Harrison which was the destination of the travelers was sixty miles farther up river . . . at daybreak on the 27th of June the journey was resumed. The evening of the 3rd of July found them within a few miles of the fort. Bright and early the next morning, July 4th, everyone was astir, for there was a friendly rivalry between the boats as to which should reach the fort first. They were not unexpected; word had been received at the fort that the immigrants were near. Charges of powder were put in the guns and the entire population of the post was on the lookout for these new settlers, when about 6 o'clock, the boats were seen coming around the bend, the large boat leading with the Major's flag, the Stars and Stripes, floating from the bow, a salute was fired from the fort and was answered by rousing cheers from the immigrants.

"The officers of the garrison came down to the barn to welcome the strangers. When a landing had been effected, Major Markie invited them all to come aboard his boat, where a table was spread with cake and wines and where a social hour was spent in drinking toasts, as was the custom of the day.

"Among the gentlemen thus entertained was a handsome young Kentuckian, Dr. John McCollough, who was the surgeon at the fort. He was introduced to Aunt Matilda and it was a case of love at first sight. I will say right here that they were married a year later, when Aunt Matilda was little more than sixteen years old."

Community Develops.

"The fort . . . was built in the fall of 1811 on a bluff on the eastern bank of the river. It was a stockade, with blockhouses two stories high at the corners facing the river. Soon after the fort was built some Frenchmen established a trading post near it, and in the community of four or five years a small settlement of whites had sprung up around the stockade.

"At the time of my story there was but one unoccupied house in the settlement, a log cabin of two rooms with puncheon floor and a loft. Into this house a part of my grandmother's furniture and goods were moved, and she with her children took possession. Three other houses were immediately begun but until they were finished Major Markle pitched his marquee and domiciled beneath it his family. The other families remained on their boats . . . now she (grandmother) set to work to make her house neat and comfortable and somewhat more pleasant and homelike. She could not obtain any female help in the settlement, but a French boy about eighteen years old, the son of a trader, agreed to help with the work, indoors and out.

"He did the roughest part of the work, such as washing and scrubbing, and helped the boys in preparing the ground for planting a few vegetables. It was too late in

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Community Affairs File

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

the season to make a large planting. They also built a porch on the west side of the house, which was the front. Its floor, like all the others, was puncheon, with the bark left on. It was a rude affair, but it served to keep off the rays of the hot afternoon sun, in some degree and made a pleasant place to sit in the cool of the evening.

Space does not permit the telling of any more of this most interesting account of those early days at Fort Harrison. At another time I'll tell you about the home which the parents of the writer, Mary Elizabeth Ball Peddle, built on what we now know as First street. Her father was Dr. Edward Voorhees Ball and her mother was Sarah Elizabeth Richardson, daughter of Joseph Richardson, who brought his family out here from New York.

Another Version of Arrival.

Blackford Condit's "History of Early Terfre Haute 1816-1840," describes the arrival of this "first important colony that came to Vigo County."

"On the 4th of July, 1816, when this little flotilla landed at the fort, a salute of fifteen guns was fired, as they hove in sight. The garrison was out in their gayest uniforms, and when the women and children began to clamber up the banks, the soldiers and officers hurrahed, and threw up their caps. The welcome was a hearty one, and long to be remembered by the members of this new colony, and by their descendants as well."

Maybe the motorboat races on the Wabash held for several years on the Fourth of July were more appropriate in the way of celebration than most of us realized. Especially if any of the spectators or participants stopped a moment to remember the arrival of these early residents via the Wabash in 1816 on America's most patriotic holiday.

5/18/71 Fort Harrison, T, H

TERRE HAUTE TRIB.

Note Significance of Old Fort Harrison Cemetery

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Fort Harrison is the most historic spot is this area. Not just because of the local incident, but because of the important part it played in the history of the United States.

Fort Harrison was built 160 years ago by General William Henry Harrison, then Governor of the Indiana territory, and his soldiers as they marched through here on their way from Vincennes north to the Battle of Tippecanoe. This fort was to be a storage place for supplies for the army and protection in case of defeat in the campaign against Tecumseh and his brother the Prophet.

The site was chosen because it was the nearest point to the Indian boundary line that was suitable for a fort. The bed in the Wabash river gives a good view both up and donwstream, the land is high, and at that time was covered with forest trees, mainly oak, tulip poplar and honey locust, which furnished lumber for building the fort.

Fort Harrison was 150 feet square. The west side toward the river had blockhouses on each corner with barracks in between. These were stoutly built round log houses with shed roofs. The upper stories projected out over the lower so the outside of three walls of the fort could be seen by the guards. The guardhouse was on the north. The rest of the fort including the stables were of palisades set in a trench about four feet deep. The logs were bound together with grapevines. The gate was on the east.

Fort Harrison was finished on Oct. 23, 1811. The entire garrison was called out to hear Major Joseph Hamilton Daviess give a little speech, break a bottle of whiskey on the gate, and name the rude stockade "Fort Harrison" after the General.

At this time in history the Wabash river was the western frontier. This was the jumping off place as there was nothing west of the river except tall prairie grass, so tall a man on horseback could not be seen as he rode through.

Six days later boats arrived with supplies. Two companies of mounted Kentucky riflemen joined Harrison's army which now totaled nine hundred men, and they started the march to Prophetstown. On Nov. 7, 1811, they engaged in the Battle of Tippecanoe near Lafayette, Ind.

Even after this great victory the Indian troubles were not entirely over. Sometime during the summer of 1812 Captain Zachary Taylor was made the commandant of Fort Harrison with a garrison of fifty men. Malaria was always a problem in early days and seldom were more than one-third of his men fit for duty at one time. Several families moved into the fort, and the men went outside to do a little farming and hunting.

This was the state of affairs on Sept. 3rd when the Pigeon Roost Massacre occurred in which 24 persons were killed That same day two men were killed near Fort Harrison while making hay.

On the afternoon of Sept. 4th, a large band of Indians approached the fort under a flag of truce asking for provisions. Capt. Taylor suspected treachery and would not treat with them. Instead he started making preparations to resist attack. He had women and children to protect as well as his ailing men. Capt. Taylor himself had been quite ill with malaria.

He issued 16 rounds of ammunition to each man for the muzzle-loading long rifles. There were no automatics in those days! Each man knew how to aim and hit his target to make every bullet count.

Anout midnight the Indians attacked by setting fire to the southwest blockhouse which contained the stores of the Indian trader. Under cover of darkness an Indian crawled up carrying a burning brand under his blanket, poked it through the cracks between the logs where the cows had licked holes to reach the salt stored there, and set the fire. A bucket brigade was formed and everyone who was not busy elsewhere passed buckets of water from the well to the fire while the soldiers fought off the Indians

In no time the fire reached the whiskey stored in the blockhouse and there was no hope of saving the building. Capt. Taylor ordered the roof of the barracks next to the burning building to be torn off and the walls kept wet so the fire did not spread. The Indians expected to see an opening in the wall of the fort about twenty feet wide that they could pass through, but Capt. Taylor had some men building a barricade behind the fire across the opening and before the fire had cooled, the wall was complete again.

To show Capt. Taylor's coolness during the Indian attack, the women implored him to prevent them being captured and tortured or butchered by the savages. He is supposed to have said: "Certainly, I will prevent it. I will set fire to the powder magazine and blow up the fort if I can't whip the savages!"

Much was expected of pioneer women in those days, too. The water in the well got so low that they couldn't draw up a bucket, so one of the women, Julia Lambert, volunteered to be lowered into the well and dip up the water with a gourd dipper to fill the buckets.

The women tended the sick and wounded, and after the fire was out, moulded the lead bullets for the men and loaded the guns. One little girl toddled back and forth between her

Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

mother and father dragging the heavy guns by the muzzle so her mother could load the guns for her father to shoot.

Everyone has seen Hollywood versions of Indian attacks on the white settler's fort — the screams, the yelling, the shooting and the bloodcurdling war whoops, the fire lighting up the dark night. Two of the men panicked and thinking they would be better off to face the enemy outside the burning fort, jumped the wall. One was killed in a few minutes. The other managed to crawl back severely wounded. This fierce attack was kept up till daylight when the Indians began to withdraw. As a last gesture, they drove up all the livestock, the cattle, horses, and hogs and butchered them all as the white settlers watched helplessly.

Battle losses included two killed, two wounded in the fort; one killed and one wounded outside the fort; two killed in the field the previous day; and two killed early in the day as they were returning to the fort. Total —seven killed, three wounded. There was already a need for a cemetery at Fort Harrison.

Capt. Taylor tried to send for help, but the canoe couldn't get past the Indian guards and their bonfires on both sides of the river just south of town. Finally a man floated down river on a log and passed the sentinels safely before swimming to shore and going overland to Vincennes for help. The people existed on green corn and few supplies until help and supplies came.

A contingent of 1,200 men with supplies arrived at Fort Harrison and moved on to hunt out and destroy all Indians and villages in the area. This was not too successful, so another army under Capt. Taylor with 2,000 men marched out of Vincennes to Fort Harrison and on into Illinois to destroy many Indian villages.

It is amazing how many soldiers and civilians passed through little Fort Harrison during the years 1812 and 1813. Sickness and accidents caused many deaths in addition to the ever present danger of being killed by Indians. More and more were laid to rest in the little cemetery near the south edge of the fort.

Fort Harrison stopped being a military post about 1822. The property was then owned by several persons before being purchased by the Elks Lodge for their country club.

During the political campaign of 1840 — "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too!" — when William Henry Harrison ran for president, the few remaining logs were cut up into walking canes and sold for souvenirs. A few small pieces of logs are still in existence in museums and private collections as gavels, etc. The old Elk's clubhouse which is being torn down contained the logs that were used in building the farm house of Cornelius Smock who lived there for many years before the Ehrmann family. This was a hewn log structure. The original Fort Harrison was built in a hurry from round logs, not squared off, and they even sprouted the next spring.

The Battle of Fort Harrison is a high-sounding title for a very small affair, but it was important, not because of the fifty brave soldiers and the white settlers who survived the Indian attack, but because the attempt to capture Fort Harrison was part of the overall plan of the British army in Canada. They planned to capture Fort Wayne and Fort Harrison on Sept. 3rd and 4th. After Detroit fell to the British, these were the only two outposts in the way of transferring the War of 1812 from the Great Lakes to the Ohio River.

From Fort Harrison came two Presidents of the United States. William Henry Harrison became the ninth President in 1840; Zachary Taylor, hero of the battle, became the twelfth President.

In his official report to Gen. Harrison, Capt. Taylor told of the "nine women and children, a part soldiers' and part citizens' wives who had taken shelter in Fort Harrison." How much easier the historian's task would be today if Capt. Taylor had only named these nine women and in someway identified those children. Many descendants of these brave pioneers still live in this community.

When family cemeteries were opened away from the fort, some of the dead were taken up and reburied with their families. This accounts for the vacan graves found in the old For Harrison Cemetery. One wom an and two infants were foun there in addition to the men After 160 years it is impossibl to say which man was a soldie or civilian, so there was n possibility of removing any to a military cemetery.

The fate of Fort Harriso cemetery in the middle of Whit comb Boulevard where it dead ends at the south edge of the Elk's parking lot is still being decided. The soldiers and civilians who lie buried there have slept on peacefully for 160 years. They will wait a short time longer before it can be determined whether the Elk's will blacktop and drive over them as they planned, or whether they will be allowed a more suitable last resting place in the form of a proper cemetery suitably marked and honored for their sacrifice to this country.

The Vigo County Historical Society has assumed the responsibility of preserving this important unexpected discovery of local history which had eluded historians for over a century, and welcomes the interest and help of everyone in this undertaking.

Xerox for Clark Dorothy File Fort Harrison

AP Newsfeatures

T.H. Fort Harrison

Women of Ft. Harrison Were Pioneer Heroines

T.H. Trib-Star, 9/5/71. X

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Those persons who remember their history can visualize a log fort on a hill overlooking the Wabash River whenever old Fort Harrison is mentioned. Then comes the mental picture of the brave men who stood guard and defended the fort against the Indian attack on the night of Sept. 4, 1812.

Those gifted with imagination (both technicolor and with sound) can almost see the Indians stealthily creeping up on the fort for the attack, can believe the terror of the women and children, and sympathize with the ailing soldiers afraid for their scalps but doing their best to defend the fort against superior numbers.

Captain Zachary Taylor, then only 28 years old, was commanding the small garrison of the fort at that time. He was recovering from an attack of malaria, as were most of the settlers that year. In his report to General William Henry Harrison at Vincennes, he told of this illness, the difficulty of getting his orders executed, and "Sir, what from the raging fire, the yelling and howling of several hundred Indians, the cries of nine women and children (soldiers' and citizens' wives, who had taken shelter in the fort) I can assure you that my feelings were very unpleasant, and indeed there were not more than ten or twelve men able to do a great deal . . ."

Nine women and children! All the official recognition they ever received! Do you suppose for a minute those nine women and children were huddled into some dark corner and told to keep still? Well, perhaps they were, but they didn't as it was learned in later years. How much easier the historian's task would be today if Captain Taylor had only named those nine women and in some way identified those children.

Later, as families settled in the community and took up the work of living without fear of Indian attack, became neighbors and exchanged memories of those terrible days, the reports of the people involved — sodiers, citizens, women and children — became common knowledge. From family traditions we have been able to identify these nine women and children who were in the fort. The children were sorted into boys and girls and even their number.

Dorothy Clark

At the time of the Centennial Celebration of the attack on Fort Harrison in 1912, an attempt was made to learn the identity of all people in the fort for, there was no official list even of the men of the garrison.

It was learned that Mrs. Joseph Dickson and her children were there. Then there was Mrs. Jonathan Graham, but no mention of any chilren. Mrs. Julia Lafferty Lambert, wife of Issac Lambert, was there. Mrs. Jane Briggs, wife of John Briggs, and their daughter, Mary, were there. Mrs. Issac Andrson and her daughter, Matilda, were there. Mrs. Peter Mallory her children were there. Mary and Roseph Dickson, young children of John Dickson, were there in the charge of their aunt Julia Lambert. And finally, John Clinton Bradford, finally, John Clinton Bradford, a baby about a year old was there.

At the Centennial Celebration, the Honorable Charles Warren Fairbanks, former Vice-President of the United States, made the principal ad-

Continued On Pge 8, Col. 3.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 5, 1971

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

dress. He mentioned the nine women and children, saying: "and it should not be forgotten that these women, to the extend of their capacity, rendered effective service in the common defense," and he went on to relate the story of Julia Lambert.

Her maiden name was Julia Lafferty, and she was the wife of Issac Lambert. They had been married in 1811 before coming to the Wabash Valley and taking shelter at Fort Harrison because of the Indian troubles in the vicinity.

When the fire in the fort was the fiercest and the water in the well seemed almost exhausted, it was Julia, young wife of Issac Lambert, who asked to be lowred into the well so that she might fill the buckets by dipping the water with a gourd dipper.

Elizabeth Lambert Dickson, wife of John Dickson, was a sister of Isaac Lambert, husband of Julia. Elizabeth and John Dickson were not at the Fort at the time of the attack. They had gone on a business trip to Vincennes, leaving their children, Mary and Joseph Dickson, in the care of their aunt, Julia Lambert. It is from this Dickson family that the local Royse family is descended rather than from Julia Lambert as is so often stated.

Then there was Mrs. Joseph Dickson and her five daughters — Margaret, Elizabeth, Nancy, Mary and Hannah — in the fort. Her husband and son were killed by the Indians as they were returning to the fort after a day's work in a nearby field.

Through all the stress and strife and bloodshed at Fort Harrison, romance survived and within the stronghold in 1813 Margaret Dickson became the wife of Stephen Handy. In time the other Dickson girls were married, but perhaps not in the fort. From this family are descended many of today's citizens of Terre Haute.

Isaac Anderson, whose wife and daughter, Matilda, were mentioned above, belonged to the army and carried mail between Fort Knox (where Matilda had been born) and St. Louis. Later he became attached to General Harrison's army. When Matilda was eight years old, he brought his wife and daughter to Fort Harrison.

The story is told that it was Matilda Anderson who later came to know the Indian who claimed he set fire to the block house by filling a large kettle with bark, soaking it in bear grease, then putting it into a hole under the corner of the block house and setting fire to it. Matilda in time married William Taylor. Their daugher Caroline Taylor married Isaac Ball, this city's first undertaker.

Next week I'll continue the story of the women and children at Fort Harrison.

Sterling Silver Guild members estimate that the bridal market accounts for 70 per cent of their sterling flatware sales.

Fort Harrison (Ind.)

—AP Newsfeatures

Women and Children Were Part of Harrison Battle

TERRE HAUTE TRIB. By DOROTHY J. CLARK 9-12-71

Last week's column began the story of the nine women and assorted children who were in old Fort Harrison at the time of the Indian attack on September 4, 1812—159 years ago this month.

Mrs. Peter Mallory and her three sons, Marvin, Calvin and Thomas, were in the fort that awful night. Her husband, Peter Mallory, had been in the Wabash Valley as early as 1810 and was a scout for General Harrison. When the Indian siege had spent itself and Captain Taylor had prepared his report for General Harrison, it was Peter Mallory and another man who were dispatched to carry the report through to Vincennes.

One report says that Mrs. Briggs and daughter Mary were at the fort. Now there were five other Briggs children at that time, the oldest of whom would have been about 17 years of age and the youngest, an infant of about one year. Where were they at the time of the attack?

It is known that John Briggs, husband and father, had settled on land in the southeast section of Otter Creek, built a cabin and about that time, had gone to Vincennes to get the rest of the household goods and other needed equipment. It is possible and probable that the two older children, being boys, had made the trip to Vincennes with their father. But Mary Briggs had an older sister Fanny who must have been in the fort with her mother and sister. But history records only that Mary Briggs and another girl of about the same age helped to mold bullets for the soldiers while the battle was going on.

Mary Briggs grew up and married George Wright of Vermillion County. The other children grew up and married and the descendants of John and Jane (Douglas) Briggs are many.

Then there is the one-year-old baby, John Clinton Bradford, unaccounted for. His father was Dr. Thomas Bradford, an Army surgeon under General Harrison. It is possible that the mother of the child had died and the baby had been left at the fort in in the care of relatives or friends. He must have had good care, for he, too, grew up and married and had two daughters, Jane and Mary. His descendants still live in Terre Haute.

Dorothy Clark

In 1887 Mrs. Hannah Burnett, one of the oldest pioneers of western Indiana, passed away. Her obituary stated that she was the only survivor of those who were in Fort Harrison during the battle, and gave an account of her life and experiences during that exciting time.

Mrs. Burnett came from a family of soldiers. Her grandfather was a brigadier general in the Revolutionary War, and her father was a capatin at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Brought to Indiana when quite small, she came to Fort Harrison from Franklin County when the Indians grew too savage there. The famous battle occurred shortly after their arrival here.

The story was told of how little Hannah climbed up and peered out one of the port-holes in the fort's wall over the gate. It was a stormy night, and during a blinding

Continued On Page 5, Col. 1.

Dorothy Clark

Continued From Page 4.

flash of lightning, she saw distinctly a huge Indian with a "blab" or crescent ornament of silver hanging from his nostrils. She begged her father to kill him so she could get his "blab." Someone did kill him, sure enough, and her father next morning, cut the metal ornament from the dead Indian and gave it to her.

Almost all that night small Hannah dragged the loaded guns from her mother to where her father stood at the port-hole and "shot with that unerring aim that always made the number less. Being but seven years old she was only able to grasp the gun by the muzzle and drag it along.

Took Ten Men

The gate of Fort Harrison was very large so as to permit a wagon to drive in and so ponderous that it required ten men to open it. It was driven full of nails, and the next morning after the battle, Hannah and her little cousin, Susan Crist, went out and gathered a hat full of bullets that had flattened and fallen beside it.

The dead Indians lay around the fort in such numbers that all available teams, wagons and sleds, etc., were required all day to haul them to Lone Hollow, a mile and a half away.

A few days after the battle an aunt of Mrs. Burnett's was sitting in the inside door (there was an inside door and an outside door) shelling corn to make lye hominy. An Indian stepped in at the outside door that had been left open contrary to order, seized her by the hair and in an instant cut off part of her scalp. He ran off after a terrific scream.

Mrs. Crist gathered up her apron holding the shelled corn, went to the cooking room, and, though bledding frightfully, prepared her hominy and that evening it was enjoyed for supper. There was no time for going to bed or whining over the loss of her hair!

All Mrs. Burnett's relatives were patriotic in the highest degree. In the War of 1812 she lost a brother-in-law; in the Black Hawk War she had four brothers and four brothers-in-law, two of each never returned; in the War of the Rebellion or Civil War she had four sons, four sons-in-law and two nephews, and two of each of the former and both of the latter gave their lives in defense of their country.

Nine of the women and seventeen children have been accounted for that survived the Battle of Fort Harrison on Sept. 4, 1812. They were: Mrs. Joseph Dickson and her five daughters (daughter Margaret married the next year so she is counted with the women), Mrs. Jonathan Graham, Mrs. Isaac Lambert, Mrs. John Briggs and at least four children, Mrs. Isaac Anderson and daughter, Mrs. Peter Mallory and three sons,

THE TRIBUNE-STAR, TERRE HA

the mother of Hannah Burnett and Hannah, Mrs. Crist and daughter Susan, and children, Mary and Joseph Dickson and baby, John Clinton Bradford.

Tecumseh, The Prophet and The Battle of Tippecanoe

Indians (Ind.) 15 NOV 10 1974

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The famous Indian chief Tecumseh was born about the year 1768, not far from where Piqua, Ohio is now located. His father, Puckeshinwa, was a member of the Kisopok tribe of the Swanoese nation, and his mother, Methontaske, was a member of the Turtle tribe of the same people.

They moved from Florida about 1850 to the Ohio location. In 1774, his father, who had risen to be chief, was killed at the battle of Point Pleasant, and not long after, Tecumseh became the tribe's leader because of his bravery.

In 1795, Tecumseh was declared chief and lived at Deer Creek, near the present location of Urbana for about a year, returning then to Piqua, and in 1798, went to White River, Indiana.

In 1805, he and his brother, Laulewasikan (Open Door), who had declared himself a prophet, went to a tract of land on the Wabash river, given to them by the Pottawatomies and the Kickapoos. From this date the chief became prominent.

He was now about 37 years old and was five feet ten inches in height, stoutly built, and possessed of enormous powers of endurance. Described as naturally pleasant in disposition, he did not resemble the more savage type of Indian.

DOROTHY J. CLARK

It was said he could read and write, and had a confidential secretary and adviser named Billy Caldwell, a half-breed, who afterward became chief of the Pottawatomies. He occpied the first house built on the site of Chicago.

At this time, Tecumseh began his life's work, his determination to unite all the Indian tribes into a league, in order that no treaties or grants of land could be made without the consent of the confederation.

He traveled constantly, going from north to south; from south to north, everywhere urging the Indians to unite. He was called a "matchless orator," and his burning words had their effect.

Governor William Henry Harrison, then Governor of Indiana Territory, was convinced that a grand conspiracy was forming and made preparations to defend the settlements.

During the year 1809, Tecumseh and the Prophet continued their work. In that year General Harrison entered intoo a treaty with the Delawares, Kickapoos, Pottawatomies, Miamis, Eel River Indians and Weas, in which these tribes ceded to the whites certain lands along the Wabash, to all of which Tecumseh bitterly protested. He did not want the Indians to give up any lands north and west of the Ohio River

In August, 1810, Tecumseh visited General Harrison at Vincennes and held a council relating to the grievances of the Indians. He became so

Continued On Page 6, Col. 1.

Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA

Dorothy Clark

Ts NOV 10 1974

Continued From Page 4.

angry at this conference he was dismissed from the village, and soon after departed to incite the southern Indian tribes.

General Harrison determined to move against the chiefs' headquarters at Tippecanoe, and set out on this famous march northward. About 65 miles up the Wabash he built Fort Harrison and from here he proceeded on the march which resulted in the now famous Battle of Tippecanoe on the morning of Nov. 7, 1811.

The Indians were routed after their surprise attack on the army camp, and their village broken up. Not long after, Tecumseh returned and was furious with his brother for rashly precipitating the war and foiling his plans.

Tecumseh sent word to General Harrison that he was now returned from the South, and was ready to visit the President, as had at one time been proposed. General Harrison informed him he could not go as chief, and the visit was never made.

In June, 1811, he visited the Indian agent at Fort Wayne. Here he disavowed any intention to make war against the United States and reproached General Harrison for marching against his people. The Agent replied to this; Tecumseh listened with cold indifference, and after making a few general remarks, with a haughty air drew his blanket around him, left the council house and departed for Fort Malden, in upper Canada, where he joined the British cause.

He remained with the British during the War of 1812. However, he was always humane in his treatment of prisoners.

On Oct. 6, 1813, at the Battle of Thames in Canada, Tecumseh was killed at the head of the column of Indians. Not hearing his voice, the Indians fled and the American victory was decisive. This practically closed with the war in the Northwest.

Just who killed Tecumseh has been a matter of great dispute, but most historians give credit to Colonel Richard M. Johnson, who fired the fatal shot with his pistol.

Tecumseh's philosophy can be best summed up in the following quotation: "The Great Spirit said he gave this great island to his red children. He placed the whites on the other side of the big water, they were not contented with their own, but came to take ours from us. They have driven us from the sea to the lakes, we can go no farther. They have taken upon themselves to say this tract belongs to the Miamis, this to the Delawares, and so on, but the Great Spirit intended it as the common property of all the tribes, nor can it be sold without the consent of all."

—Historically Speaking—

Clark, Dorothy

By Dorothy C

Fort Harrison history proves quite interesting

Community Affairs File
To OCT 2 1977

In 1815 the firm of Bailey & McCall, at Vincennes, sent a stock of goods to Fort Harrison. A keel boat was fitted out and started up the Wabash under the auspices of the partner, James B. McCall, and their trusted employee, Curtis Gilbert.

They landed with their boat at Fort Harrison on the 20th day of December, 1815.

After a survey of the surroundings, the boat was located on the western shore, directly opposite the fort.

For better security, a part of the goods were stored in a cabin attached to the fort. Major Willoughby Morgan was then in charge of the garrison.

He was succeeded the next year by Major John T. Chunn, of Vincennes. Mr. McCall soon retired from the business.

A partnership was then formed between Nathaniel B. Bailey and Curtis Gilbert on July 5, 1816, by which Bailey obligated himself to furnish goods at cost and carriage from Vincennes, and Gilbert was to transact the business and trade with the Indians at and above the fort, and share equally in the profits.

During the summer of 1816, Mr. Gilbert opened a trading post near the mouth of the Vermillion River.

He built three small houses there, one for a store with shelves, one for Indian quarters and a small house in which to smoke venison hams.

He had an interpreter who was sent up to the fort on a small pony.

Mr. Gilbert first took up a stock of goods in a boat, but supplies were afterward carried on the pony.

In the fall, Gilbert was taken very sick with fever.

When he had sufficiently recovered and could clamber in a boat, he drifted down the river to the fort.

At this period, a very hostile feeling manifested itself among the Indians, and letters of warning had been sent to Gilbert to return to the safety of the fort.

A letter from B. Parke, dated Oct. 11, 1816, stated the Vermillion Kickapoos objected to his trading there and that it would be best for him to withdraw.

"Fort Harrison, Sept. 9th, 1816... Dear Sir: Little Eyes, a Miami chief who was sent on an excursion among the Indians, has returned and brings the following news, that the garrison of Macanack has been surprised and surrounded by the Chippewa and Ottowa Indians, and that the Prophet's brother is now sending the war tomahawk amongst the different tribes to induce them to go to war against the Americans.

"The Miami chiefs think it not safe under the existing circumstances for you to remain where you are any longer.

"The statement of Little Eyes has been corroborated by the Kickapoos and some of the Powtowatomies, now here. I feel it my duty to give to you this information and then you may judge for yourself whether to remain or return.

"In haste yours respectfully, (signed) J.T. Chunn, Major Commanding."

This was addressed to Mr. Gilbert, trading on the Vermillion.

The following is a verbatim copy of the license to trade with the Indians, signed by the governor, under the great seal of the Indiana Territory:

"Thomas Posey, governor and commander in chief of the Indian territory, and superintendent of Indian affairs. To all who shall see these presents, Greetings: Know ye, That license is hereby granted to Isaac Bailey and Curtis Gilbert (of Vincennes) having under the firm of Bailey & Gilbert to trade with the Wea and Kickapoo tribes of Indians, at or near Raccoon Creek for one year from this date, they having entered into bond faithfully to observe and keep all such laws of either the general or territorial governments, as now are or hereafter may be enacted, regulating trade and intercourse with the Indian tribes.

"Given from under my hands and the seal of the territory, this 3rd day of July, 1816, and of the independence of the United States the 41st. (signed) T.H.Posey."

A receipt for a license to trade in the following year reads as follows:

"Vincennes, April 3rd, 1817... Received of Bailey & Gilbert, ten dollars for a license to retail merchandise in the County of Sullivan for the year following the first day of April, 1817. (signed) David M. Hale, Deputy Collector for Indiana."

At the expiration of Curtis Gilbert's term of co-partnership with Mr. Bailey on the 14th day of June, 1817, he formed a partnership with Andrew Brooks, with whom he was associated in the Indian trade until he was elected to the office of clerk and recorder of Vigo county.

Gilbert was commissioned postmaster of Fort Harrison, Sullivan county, Indiana, by Return J. Meigs Jr., postmaster Postmaster General, Dec. 4th, 1817.

Documents pertaining to that early postoffice are of great interest today, particularly the bill for advertising for uncalled-for letters.

"General Post Office to E.Stout, Dr., July 25, 1818... To advertising in Sun and General Advertiser, containing 38 letters, at 2c.,76.

Received, Vincennes, 19th of August, 1818, of Curtis Gilbert, postmaster at Fort Harrison, 76 cents in full for the above account. Signed duplicates, E. Stout."

The postmaster was notified by a circular letter, dated April 6, 1818, that Congress had recently established the route to Fort Harrison, through Monroe county and Lawrence county to Brownstown, and requesting information as to distance, towns, mountains, watercourses, etc., winding up with the injunction: "No expense should be incurred in procuring information."

Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Vigo County Public Library

Community Affairs File

Historically speaking

William Henry Harrison and his men were waiting for the Indians.

Clark, Dorothy
+
Fort Harrison
(7.11)

Community Affairs File

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Vigo County Public Library

Clark, Dorothy + Fort Harrison (7.11)

Fort Harrison played historical role

T OCT 2 3 1982

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

When the Indiana Territory was organized May 10, 1800, there were only about 4,800 white people in all of the area which included parts of Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. However, between 1810 and 1819, nearly 140,000 settlers streamed into the region, and Fort Harrison was to play a vital role in the moving forward of the western frontier.

The seat of government was fixed at Vincennes, and General William Henry Harrison was appointed governor of the Indiana Territory on May 13. He was able to purchase the Indian titles to three million acres of land. In turn, the early settlers bought the land from the government and began to move into the new territory.

Due to this rapid influx of white settlers, the Indian tribes on the Wabash river were stirred up in opposition to the surrendering of their land to the whites. Incited by Tecumseh and his brother, the Prophet, they entered into a confederacy against the white settlers. The situation worsened rapidly.

In July, 1811, the Secretary of Virginia authorized Harrison to call out the militia of the territory; also at his discretion to order out Boyd's regiment of U.S. Infantry to proceed at once against Prophet's Town, at the mouth of the Tippecanoe River.

On Sept. 26, 1811, he set out on the march to the upper Wabash, and on Oct. 3 encamped on the east bank of the river two miles north of the Indian village of Rising Sun, or Orchardtown, the future location of Terre Haute. Harrison was delighted with the site, and the next day began the construction of a fort.

While the fort was being built, Harrison received word from friendly Indians that "the Prophet's tomahawk was up against the whites, that nothing would induce him to take it down unless the wrongs of the Indian were redressed."

On the night of Oct. 10, some Shawnee Indians crept up on Harrison's camp and wounded one of his sentinels. On Oct. 28 the fort was completed. It was described as "an inclosure 150 feet square, a stockade of heavy timber, the two corners on the west were blockhouses, forming the outer walls. The eastern corners were bastions two stories high and projecting from the second story sufficiently to command the outside of the walls in two directions. These were pierced on each face with embrasures above and below to fire upon the enemy and guard against any approach to set fire to the buildings."

The western line towards the river was formed by the soldiers' barracks, merely strongly built log huts. The entrance gate was on the east, with the guard house on the north, and the well and powder magazine on the south. The stables, shed, etc. for the stock were on the north side.

A bottle of whiskey was broken on the gate, and the fort was named "Fort William Henry Harrison" in honor of the commanding officer. Originally intended as a back-up facility, extra supplies were stored here in case the march against the Indians was unsuccessful and the army needed a safe place to fall back to and regroup.

Colonel James Miller with a small garrison was left in command of the new fort, and Harrison with a force of some 900 men resumed the march to Prophet's Town and what was to be called the famous Battle of Tippecanoe. This battleground is located near Lafayette, Ind., and is now a state park.

Following the battle, Harrison's victorious army returned to Vincennes by way of Fort Harrison. This campaign opened up the Wabash Valley to the knowledge of the whole country. The soldiers carried home with them glorious accounts of the beauty of the area, the mildness of the climate, and the fertility of the soil. This encouraged the great onrush of settlers into this part of the country.

The catchy phrase "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" was to help elect William Henry Harrison as president of the United States. Although he lived in a mansion, Harrison was to become identified with a log cabin and a log fort — a strong background for a presidential candidate.

The logs of the old fort (which ceased to be a government military installation in 1822) were carved into canes for this political campaign of 1838. Another president was to come from service in this historic fort, but that's next Sunday's column . . .

BETWEEN THE LINES

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY...

By Josie

LAZIEST "LOOKING FOR LOVE" SCHEME OF THE WEEK: Kiel Martin, of "Hill Street Blues" recently started up with Deana Martin, Dean's daughter. Which isn't that strange except that they did know each other before. He used to be married to her sister Claudia. Sure beats singles bars...

Erin Gray

Q. Could you tell me a little about Erin Gray — how did she like working with Kenny Rogers in "Six Pack?"
Casey Clements, Mt. Zion, Ill.

A. She's pretty enthusiastic by nature and, about Kenny, she's euphoric. "What a wonderful, charismatic man he is," she said on a recent trip to New York. "And sensitive. Attuned. He really listens. I remember one time I was really concentrating on a scene I had coming up and he was just talking, joking, keeping things light, but then he noticed I was sort of distracted, so he just stopped cold. And then apologized for being so unprofessional that he didn't notice I was working. So considerate — not too many actors would have done something like that."

As for Kenny's acting ability — "Six Pack," obviously, isn't exactly "Hamlet" — Erin is also quite positive. "He knows he doesn't have much experience in acting but he's very eager to learn — he asks a lot of questions. And he really does listen, which is important to acting. Plus, he has a natural comedic talent — he's a terrific mimic."

As for Erin's life post-"Six Pack," she has the series "Silver Spoons" on NBC and her pet project, "Born Beautiful," an upcoming TV movie based on her friend model-turned-photojournalist Betsy Cameron.

"It's a true story, a touching story of her transformation from the Madison Avenue beauty to a photographer who captures the horrors of, and is affected by, the war in Cambodia," she says. "It mirrors a transformation I've had to make, a shedding of the beauty mask. In the past, I was scared to death to go out of the house without full make-up. Then you learn what is really important and you move on." She was a top model, starting at 15, for 10 years.

Aileen Quinn

Q. I am a 12 year old girl. I was wondering if you could tell me how I could write to Aileen Quinn, the star of 'Annie'? Aruwen V., Ontario, Ore.

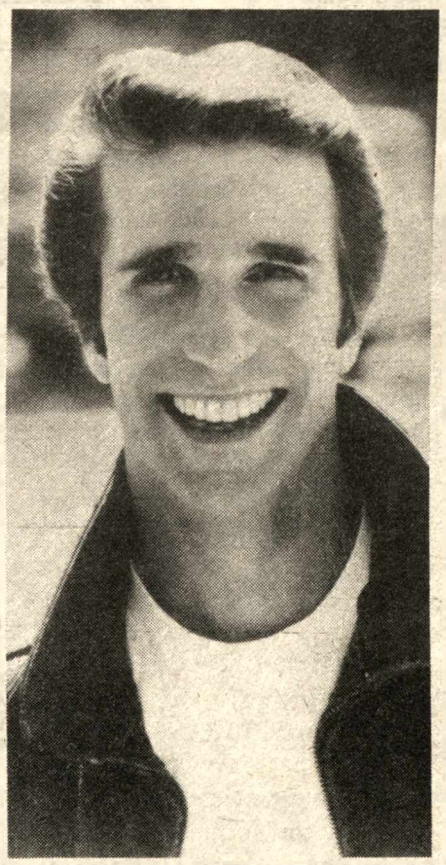
A. Send your letter c/o Vickie Horsford, Columbia Pictures, 711 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022, but be prepared for a bit of a wait: The office is filled with bags of mail. Plus, those who manage to find out Aileen's home address have sent letters there, and the Quinns are swamped. Especially Aileen.

"In the beginning, she tried to answer every letter," explains her mother Helen Anne, "but you have to understand that she just turned 11 and she can't write as fast as an adult. So it started to pile up.

"Then when we came back from Europe (in which there were two memories-are-made-of-this meetings: one with Prince Philip, the other a special audience with the Pope) there were 200 letters just at our house! So it's taking a while to answer them, but she just loves getting them, she reads every one."

Adding to the slowdown as well are her current promotion trips/premieres in Japan, Australia, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, and plans for upcoming trips to Paris and Rome.

And she's been busy with other things too: an album for Columbia Records due out any day; and her next movie, a comedy called "Full House" which starts shooting next January. Plus, her mother adds, "She was just so excited about getting back to school."



FONZ VS. HAWKEYE? As the cast of "Happy Days" changes over season to season, the Fonz, Henry Winkler, doggedly remains. Some have explained it in obvious terms: Why trade a highly successful, lucrative series for a largely unsuccessful film career (in his latest, "Night Shift," for example, co-star Michael Keaton got all the good reviews).

But there may be another reason for his staying put: A co-star admits that Winkler is fiercely competitive and wants his series to stay on the air longer than "MASH" — which is going off the air in February. When "Happy Days" surpasses that point, thinks his coworker, he might just then move it on out.

Soldiers greeted pioneers at fort

T s JUL 3 1983

Historically speaking

By Dorothy J. Clark

Many Fourth of July celebrations have been held in Terre Haute and Vigo County, some more memorable than others, but one of the very earliest was at Fort Harrison in 1816.

According to a little book, "The Story of a Hoosier Immigration," written in 1904 by Mary E. Ball Peddle, and published in 1939, the flatboat journey of six pioneer families ended July 4, 1816, when they arrived at Fort Harrison.

The families of Joseph Richardson, grandfather of the author, Major Abraham Markle, Daniel Stringham, the Harrises, the Webbs and the Redfords left New York earlier that year to found new homes in the newly formed State of Indiana.

Following the usual water route, the flotilla of flatboats reached the mouth of the Wabash River during the first week of June. Instead of floating downstream as before, the boats now had to be pushed upstream against the current.

There was little rest for anyone. Every man and boy helped in some way. Those who were not using the poles assisted by what was called bushwhacking. This could be done when the channel allowed the boats to run near the shore and under overhanging branches of the trees. Persons on deck would take branch after branch in first one hand and then the other, pulling hard, lightening the labor of those who were poleing.

"They did not reach Vincennes until the third week of June," according to the book. "Fort Harrison which was the destination of the travelers was 60 miles farther up river...at daybreak on the 27th of June the journey was resumed. The evening of the 3rd of July found them within a few miles of the fort.

"Bright and early the next morning, July 4th, everyone was astir, for there was a friendly rivalry between the boats as to which should reach the fort first. They were not unexpected; word had been received at the fort that the immigrants were near.

"Charges of powder were put in the guns and the entire population of the post was on the lookout for the new settlers, when about six o/clock, the boats were seen coming around the bend, the large boat leading with the Major's flag, the Stars and Stripes, floating from the bow, a salute was fired from the fort and was answered by rousing cheers from the immigrants.

"The officers of the garrison came down to the river bank to welcome the strangers. When a landing had been effected, Major Markle invited them all to come aboard his boat, where a table was spread with cake and wines and where a social hour was spent in drinking toasts, as was the custom of the day."

Mrs. Peddle told how a handsome young Kentuckian, Dr. John McCollough, surgeon at Fort Harrison, was introduced to her Aunt Matilda, then only 16 years old. It was love at first sight, and they were married a year later.

The Peddle description of life at Fort Harrison was vivid. Built in the fall of 1811 on the eastern bluff of the river, it was a stockade, with blockhouses two stories high at the corners facing the river. Soon after the fort was built, some Frenchmen established a trading post near it, and during the next five years, a small settlement of white settlers had built log cabines.

"At the time of my story," wrote Mrs. Peddle, "there was but one unoccupied house in the settlement, a log cabin of two rooms with puncheon floor and a loft. Into this house a part of my grandmother's furniture and goods were moved, and she with her children (seven) took possession.

"Three other houses were immediately begun, but until they were finished Major Markle pitched his marquee (tent) and domiciled beneath it with his family. The other families remained on their boats...now she (grandmother) set to work to make her house neat and comfortable and somewhat more pleasant and homelike."

"She could not obtain any female help in the settlement, but a French boy about 18 years old, the son of a trader, agreed to help with the work, indoors and out. He did the roughest part of the work. Such as washing and scrubbing, and helped the boys in preparing the ground for planting a few vegetables. It was too late in the season to make a large planting.

"They also built a porch on the west side of the house, which was the front. Its floor, like all the others, was puncheon, with the bark left on. It was a rude affair, but it served to keep off the rays of the hot afternoon sun, in some degree and made a pleasant place to sit in the cool of the evening."

Condit's "History of Early Terre Haute" describes the arrival of this "first important colony that came to Vigo County."

"On the 4th of July, 1816, when this little flotilla landed at the fort, a salute of 15 guns was fired, as they hove into sight. The garrison was out in their gayest uniforms, and when the women and children began to clamber up the banks, the soldiers and officers hurrahed, and threw up their caps. The welcome was a hearty one, and long to be remembered by the members of this new colony, and by their decendants as well."

Maybe the noisy motorboat races held on the Wabash River for several years on the 4th of July were more appropriate to celebrate the day than most residents realized. With their noise and again at nightfall when the fireworks display began booming, history was repeating itself on that spot. How many of the spectators or participants at these modern events ever stopped a moment to remember the arrival in 1816 of those early people who arrived at Fort Harrison on the river bank on American's most patriotic holiday?

Vigo County Public Library
REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE
Community Affairs File

Community Affairs File

landscape in 1812

Community Affairs File

T DEC 2 9 1985

Gen. Harrison misread

HISTORY - WV CLARK DOROTHY

Historically speaking

Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

The greatest misstatement of the year was made by Gen. William H. Harrison when he wrote in 1812 that "the frontier never enjoyed more perfect repose."

In fact, the particular portion of the frontier known as Fort William Henry Harrison, located just north of the present city of Terre Haute, was certainly not enjoying "perfect repose."

Frequent Indian alerts were causing nearby settlers to move into the fort for protection 173 years ago. Finally, on Sept. 4, 1812, the Indians attacked the fort. The attack resulted in the Battle of Fort Harrison, one of the last battles of the War of 1812.

The previous year had been a time of strange happenings. Early in September 1811, a comet appeared in the northern skies, passing across the country and disappearing in the south later in the year. Less enlightened folks looked on this event as an ominous forerunner of terrible misfortunes to come.

On Sept. 17, 1811, a beautiful cloudless day, occurred an eclipse of the sun. The contrast between bright sunshine at noon and almost total darkness before the sun reappeared at 3:30 p.m. afforded a grand sight for astronomers. But the phenomenon alarmed the settlers of the Wabash Valley.

About Oct. 1, a convicted prisoner awaiting execution in Virginia pretended he had experienced a revelation foretelling the destruction of one-third of mankind by June 4, 1812. A young lawyer saw a way to make some money from this sensational prediction and proceeded to publish a pamphlet on the subject with drawings illustrating the horrible sights of the calamities to come. This popular publication enjoyed an immense circulation across the Midwest.

Nov. 7, 1811, the Battle of Tippecanoe brought grief to many families as word was received of the death or wounding of relatives or close friends.

The violent earthquake of the Mississippi Valley occurred Dec. 15 and Dec. 16. It was the most disastrous ever recorded in the United States.

Next was the theater fire at Richmond, Va., at Christmas time. It killed more than 70 people. A capacity crowd either died in the fierce flames or were crushed to death trying to escape. This tragic news spread across the country and kept alive the rumors instigated by the convict.

The unmistakable evidence of an approaching Indian war alarmed all the people, and by the end of

Vigo County Public Library

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

1811 the climate of gloom and doom was universal.

The building of the first steamboat west of the Alleghenies was the one bright note in that year. The "New Orleans" was built at Pittsburgh and launched on the Ohio River. This wood-burning steamer took 70 hours to make the 600-mile trip to Louisville. Woodyards were non-existent at that early time, and constant delays were necessary while dead trees were chopped down and cut into fire wood.

Two coal beds were discovered near Louisville, and the owners decided to dig coal and load the vessel before continuing on to Natchez, Miss., where the boat would be stationed between trips to New Orleans.

Settlers along the river were terrified of the new invention speeding along without visible means of locomotion. When the boat arrived in Louisville on a quiet moonlit night, the extraordinary sound of the pent-up steam escaping from the valves produced a general alarm. Everyone got out of bed to see what new catastrophe had occurred. Most Kentuckians believed the comet had fallen in the river. What the Indians thought about the first steamboat was anyone's guess.

Because of low water the boat was delayed three weeks before the voyage was resumed. Narrowly escaping the earthquake, the steamboat finally reached Natchez the first week of January 1812.

And that's how it was 173 years ago this week.

Who was who at Fort Harrison

Clark, Dorothy Ts SEP 0 6 1987

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

On Sept. 4-5, 1812, at the time of the Indian siege of Fort Harrison, some 60 people, soldiers and citizens, were in the fort.

Known to have been in the fort at that time were Capt. Zachary Taylor, commandant; Dr. William A. Clark, U.S. Army surgeon; Drummer Davis, a deserter from the English army who joined the Americans as a musician; William Bandy, a Virginian soldier; William Cowen, who was killed in the fight; Josey Cowen, his brother who died the next day of disease; Joseph Dickson and family; Jonathan Graham and wife; Isaac Lambert and wife, Julia Lafferty Lambert; Mrs. Briggs and her daughter, Mary; Mrs. Isaac Anderson and her daughter, Matilda; Mary and Joseph Dickson; the young children of John Dickson, in the care of their aunt, Julia Lambert; Peter Mallory and family; and a 1-year-old baby, John Clinton Bradford.

Joseph Liston, who helped build the fort, stated that Isaac Lambert, John Dickson, Mr. Hudson, Mr. Chatry and Mr. Mallory cultivated the lands under the protection of the fort. Joseph Dickson came to Indiana in 1811 and planted crops near the fort. He and his son and another man were killed by the Indians as they were returning to the fort. The daughters of Joseph Dickson were Margaret, who married Stephen D. Handy at the fort in 1813, Mary Dickson Clarke, and Hannah Dickson Harris.

John Dickson came to Indiana sometime in 1811 and may have helped build the fort. He had a contract to supply beef and other materials to the garrison. His supplies were burned in the blockhouse while he and his wife were in Vincennes, but two of their children, Mary and Joseph, were in the fort at the time of the siege under the care of their aunt, Julia Lambert.

Isaac Lambert came to the region in 1811 and cultivated land under the protection of the fort. He and his family were in the fort and helped in its defense.

Matilda Anderson, daughter of Isaac Anderson, was born at Fort Knox in 1804. Isaac Anderson belonged to the army and was mail carrier between Fort Knox and St. Louis. He served as orderly sergeant in Harrison's army and moved his family to Fort Harrison in 1812.

Peter Mallory came to this region in 1811, and probably helped build the fort. He plowed his land with a loaded gun strapped to his back in anticipation of an Indian attack. Following the siege, he was one of the messengers from Capt. Taylor to Gen. Harrison at Vincennes.

Mary Briggs and another girl molded bullets during the attack. Briggs later married George Wright and had a son, William.

Joseph Liston came to what is now Vigo County in 1811 with his father, Edmond Liston, his brother-in-law, Reuben Moore, William E. Adams, Martin Adams and William Drake.

They planted, cultivated and harvested 75 acres of corn and sold it to Gen. Harrison for the army while they were building the fort. Liston and perhaps others of his company were militia soldiers.

Joseph Liston was a scout famous for his skill in getting knowledge of the movements of the Indians and helping prevent destruction of property and loss of life. He boasted that he had never taken a human life. Joseph helped build the fort, but did not go to Tippecanoe, and was not in the fort during the attack.

Abraham Markle and Joseph Richardson of Genneseo County, N.Y., visited Fort Harrison in 1815, three years after the Indian trouble. They returned East to bring their families out west, reaching Fort Harrison on July 4, 1816. Mrs. Richardson occupied a cabin near the fort and took her family inside when there were signs of possible Indian trouble.

Curtis Gilbert arrived at Fort Harrison in December 1815 to become a government-licensed Indian trader and postmaster until the fall of 1818 when he removed to Terre Haute.

James Matthew Stewart was one of the pioneers at Fort Harrison. He arrived with his bride in 1817 and remained a few months. In 1819 he established the Stewart House, a noted hostelry in Terre Haute.

Dr. Charles B. Modesitt came to the fort in 1816. His sons were James A. Modesitt and Wilton M. Modesitt. He had one daughter, Frances Anna, who married Chauncey Warren.

Susan Spencer was in the fort about 1816 with her uncle, Andrew Brooks. She married Andrew Wilkins, and their children were Emily Wilkins Early, Rachel E. Wilkins, Mary B. Wilkins, Lida Wilkins Merrill, John E., William, and George D. Wilkins.

Caleb Crawford and family arrived in Fort Harrison in May 1817. One daughter, Ann Mary, married David W. Rankin, and their children were Sarah E., Morton C., and Oscar. Another daughter, Emeline, married Henry Fairbanks. Their son, Crawford Fairbanks, built the public library and named it for his mother. Caleb Crawford and his descendants were not closely related to the fort, but were under its protection while living on a farm a short distance away during the Indian scares of 1817 and 1818.

After the fort was completed in October 1811, Lt. Col. James Miller was in command from Oct. 31 to Nov. 14 while the army was on the Tippecanoe campaign.

Capt. Josiah Snelling, of the Fourth Regiment of the U.S. Infantry, was in command from Nov. 14, 1811, to sometime in June 1812. He was promoted to colonel of the Fifth Infantry in 1819. Fort Snelling, Minn., is named for him.

Capt. Zachary Taylor was in command from June 1812 to Sept. 16, 1812, defending Fort Harrison during the Indian siege.

Maj. Willoughby Morgan was in command of the fort in December 1815. Whether he succeeded Capt. Taylor or whether there was another officer between them is not known. In about May 1816, he was ordered to other duty by Gen. Jackson, then commander-in-chief of the army, and left Maj. John T. Chunn in command of the fort. It is said that he rebuilt the fort.

Maj. Chunn was transferred May 10, 1816, from Fort Knox to Fort Harrison. Since he was ordered to remove government property from Fort Knox to Fort Harrison, this apparently was the end of Fort Knox as a government post.

Maj. Chunn helped build the fort at the time of the Harrison campaign to Tippecanoe, and then was a lieutenant in one of the companies of that army. After he resigned from the army in 1821, he returned to Terre Haute to live.

During the time of Maj. Chunn's command of Fort Harrison, there was no trouble with hostile Indians, but there were numerous scares in 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819 and 1820, even after the fort had been abandoned by the garrison.

Maj. Robert Sturgus served as a volunteer private in Capt. Benjamin Parks' troop of light dragoons in the Tippecanoe campaign, and so helped build Fort Harrison. He never married and died in 1828 in Terre Haute.

When Maj. Chunn was transferred, Sturgus served as commandant after July 4, 1817, resigning Feb. 10, 1818, when Fort Harrison ceased to be a military post.

Vigo County Public Library
Community Affairs File
REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA
Community Affairs File

Log fort site of ferocious battle

TS SEP 04 1994

15

☆ Clark, Dorothy ↓ ☆ History (LW)

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

People remembering their Terre Haute history can visualize a log fort on a hill overlooking the Wabash River whenever old Fort Harrison is mentioned. Then comes the mental picture of the brave men who stood guard and defended the fort against the Native Americans' attack on the night of Sept. 4, 1812.

Those gifted with imagination (with color and sound) can almost see the Native Americans stealthily creeping up on the fort. They can believe the terror of the women and children, and sympathize with the ailing soldiers afraid for their scalps but doing their best to defend the fort against superior numbers.

Capt. Zachary Taylor, only 28 years old, was commanding the small garrison of the fort at that time. He was recovering from an attack of malaria, as were most of the settlers that year.

In his report to Gen. William Henry Harrison at Vincennes, he told of this illness, the difficulty of getting his orders executed and, "Sir, what from the raging of the fire, the yelling and howling of several hundred Indians, the cries of nine women and children [soldier's and citizen's families] who had taken shelter in the Fort, I can assure you that my feelings were very unpleasant, and indeed, there were not more than ten or twelve men able to do a great deal. . . ."

Nine women and their children! All the official recognition they ever received! Do you suppose for a minute those nine women and children were huddled into some dark corner and told to keep still? Well, perhaps they were, but they didn't, as it was learned in later years. How much easier the historian's task would be today if Taylor had only named those nine women, and some way identified those children.

Later, as families settled in the community and took up the work of living without fear of Native American attack, they became neighbors and exchanged memories of those terrible days. The reports of the people involved, soldiers, citizens, women and children, became common knowledge. From family traditions we have been able to identify these nine women and children who were in the fort. The children have now been sorted out into boys and girls and relationships.

In 1912, at the time of the Centennial Celebration of the attack on Fort Harrison, an attempt was made to learn the identity of all people in the fort, for there was no official list even of the men of the garrison.

It was learned that Mrs. Joseph Dickson and her children were there. Mrs. Jonathan Graham was present, but no mention of any children. Julia Lafferty Lambert, wife of Isaac Lambert, was there. Mrs. James Briggs and daughter, Mary, were there. Mrs. Isaac Anderson and her daughter, Matilda, were there. Mrs. Peter Mallory and her children were there. Mary and Joseph Dickson, young children of John Dickson, were there in the charge of their aunt, Julia Lambert. And finally, John Clinton Bradford, a baby only a year old, was there.

At the Centennial Celebration, the Honorable Charles Warren Fairbanks, former vice president of the United States, made the principal address. He mentioned the nine women and children, saying: "and it should not be forgotten that these women, to the extent of their capacity, rendered effective service in the common defense," and he went on to relate the story of Julia Lambert.

Her maiden name was Julia Lafferty. She and Isaac Lambert were married in 1811 before coming to the Wabash Valley and taking shelter in Fort Harrison because of the Native American troubles in the area.

When the fire in the fort was the fiercest, and the water in the well seemed almost exhausted, it was Julia who asked to be lowered into the well so that she might fill the buckets by dipping the water with a gourd dipper.

Elizabeth Lambert Dickson, wife of John Dickson, was a sister of Isaac Lambert. Elizabeth and John were not at the fort at the time of the attack. They had gone on a business trip to Vincennes, leaving their children, Mary and Joseph Dickson, in the care of their Aunt Julia. It is from this Dickson family that members of the local Royse family are descended rather than from Julia Lambert as is so often stated.

Then there was Mrs. Joseph Dickson and her five daughters, Margaret, Elizabeth, Nancy, Mary and Hannah, in the fort. Her husband and son were killed by the Native Americans as they were returning to the fort after a day's work in a nearby field.

Through all the stress and strife and bloodshed in Fort Harrison, romance survived, and within the stronghold in 1813, Margaret Dickson became the bride of Stephen Handy. In time the other Dickson girls were married, but perhaps not in the fort. From this family are descended many of today's citizens of Terre Haute.

Isaac Anderson, whose wife and daughter, Matilda, were mentioned above, belonged to the Army and carried mail between Fort Knox (where Matilda had been born) and St. Louis. Later he became attached to Harrison's army. When Matilda was 8 years old, he brought his wife and daughter to Fort Harrison.

The story is told that it was Matilda Anderson who later came to know the Native American who claimed he set fire to the blockhouse by filling a large kettle with bark, soaking it in bear grease, then putting it into a hold under the corner of the blockhouse and setting fire to it. Matilda, in time, married William Taylor. Their daughter, Caroline Taylor, married Isaac Ball, Terre Haute's first undertaker.

Next week I'll continue the story of the women and children in Fort Harrison. . . .

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

Woman loses hair, keeps cooking

Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark
Special to the Tribune-Star

Last week's column began the story of the nine women and assorted children who were in old Fort Harrison at the time of the Native American attack Sept. 4, 1812, 182 years ago this month!

Mrs. Peter Mallory and her three sons, Martin, Calvin and Thomas, were in the fort that awful night. Her husband, Peter Mallory, had been in the Wabash Valley as early as 1810 and was a scout for Gen. Harrison. When the Native American siege had spent itself, and Capt. Taylor had prepared his report to Gen. Harrison, it was Peter Mallory and another man who were dispatched to carry the report to Vincennes.

One report says Mrs. Briggs and daughter Mary were in the fort. Now there were five other Briggs children at the time, the oldest of whom would have been about 17 years of age, and the youngest, an infant of about one year. Where were they at the time of the attack?

It is known that John Briggs, husband and father, had settled on land in the southeast section of Otter Creek, built a cabin, and about that time, had gone to Vincennes to get the rest of the household goods and other necessary equipment.

It is possible and probable that the two older children, being boys, made the trip to Vincennes with their father. But Mary Briggs had an older sister, Fanny, who must have been in the fort with her mother and sister. But records show that Mary Briggs and another girl of about the same age helped to mold bullets for the soldiers while the battle was going on.

Mary Briggs grew up and married George Wright of Vermillion County. The other children grew up and married. The descendants of John and Jane (Douglas) Briggs are many.

The year-old baby, John Clinton Bradford, was the son of Dr. Thomas Bradford, an Army surgeon under Gen. Harrison. It is possible that the mother of the child had died, and the baby had been left in the fort in the care of relatives or friends. He must have had good care, for he, too, grew up and married. He had two daughters, Jane and Mary. His descendants still live at Terre Haute.

In 1887, Mrs. Hannah Burnett, one of the oldest pioneers of western Indiana, passed away. Her obituary stated that she was the only survivor of those who were in Fort Harrison during the battle, and gave an account of her life and experiences during that exciting time. Mrs. Burnett came from a family of soldiers. Her grandfather was a brigadier general in the Revolutionary War, and her father was a captain at the Battle of Tippecanoe.

Brought to Indiana when quite small, Hannah came to Fort Harrison from Franklin County when the Native Americans grew too savage there. The famous battle occurred shortly after their arrival here.

The story was told of how little Hannah climbed up and peered out one of the portholes in the fort's wall over the gate. It was a stormy night, and during a blinding flash of lightning, she saw distinctly a huge Native American with a "blab" or crescent ornament of silver hanging from his nostrils. She begged her father to kill him so she could get his "blab." Someone did kill him, sure enough, and her father next morning took the metal ornament from the dead Native American and gave it to her.

Almost all that night, small Hannah dragged the loaded guns from her mother to where her father stood at the porthole and "shot with that unerring aim that always made the number less." Being but 7 years old, she was only able to grasp the gun by the muzzle and drag it along.

The gates of Fort Harrison were very large so as to permit a wagon to drive in, and so ponderous that it required 10 men to open them. The gates were driven full of nails, and the next morning after the battle, Hannah and her little cousin, Susan Crist, went out and gathered a hat full of bullets that had flattened and fallen behind the gates.

The dead Native Americans lay around the fort in such numbers that all available teams, wagons, and sleds, etc., were required all day to haul them to Lone Hollow, a mile and a half away.

A few days after the battle, an aunt of Mrs. Burnett's was sitting in the inside door (yes, there were two doors in those log cabins) shelling corn to make lye hominy. A Native American stepped in at the outside door that had been left open contrary to order, seized her by the hair, and in an instant, cut off part of her scalp. He run off with a terrific scream.

Mrs. Crist gathered up her apron holding the shelled corn, went to the cooking room, and, though bleeding frightfully, prepared her hominy. That evening it was enjoyed for supper. There was no time for going to bed, or whining over the loss of her hair!

All Mrs. Burnett's relatives were patriotic in the highest degree. In the War of 1812 she lost a brother-in-law; in the Black Hawk War she had four brothers and four brothers-in-law, and two of each never returned. In the Civil War she had four sons, four sons-in-law and two nephews, and two of each and both of the latter gave their lives as patriots.

Nine of the women and 17 children have been accounted for as survivors of the Battle of Fort Harrison on Sept. 4, 1812. They were: Mrs. Joseph Dickson and her five daughters (daughter Margaret was counted with the women as she married the next year); Mrs. Jonathan Graham; Mrs. Isaac Lambert; Mrs. John Briggs and at least four children; Mrs. Isaac Anderson and her daughter, Matilda; Mrs. Peter Mallory and three sons; little Hannah Burnett and her mother; Mrs. Crist and daughter Susan; and children Mary and Joseph Dickson, and baby John Clinton Bradford.

Community Affairs File
REFERENCE DO NOT CIRCULATE
VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY TERRE HAUTE INDIANA

Clark, Dorothy

Taylor letter details 1812 battle

Ts AUG 3 0 1987

The best account of what happened at Fort Harrison during September 1812 is found in a letter from Capt. Zachary Taylor, commanding officer at Fort Harrison, Indiana Territory, to Gen. William Henry Harrison. The letter is dated Sept. 10, 1812.

"Dear Sir: On Thursday morning, the 3rd instant, after retreat beating, four guns were heard to fire in the direction where two young men (citizens who resided here) were making hay, about 400 yards distant from the fort.

"I was immediately impressed with an idea that they were killed by the Indians, as the Miamis or Weas had that day informed me that the Prophet's party would soon be here for the purpose of commencing hostilities, and that they had been directed to leave this place which we were about to do.

"I did not think it prudent to send out at that late hour of the night to see what had become of them; and their not coming convinced me that I was right in my conjecture. I waited until eight o'clock next morning when I sent out a corporal with a small party to find them, if it could be done without running too much risk of being drawn into an ambuscade.

"He soon sent back to inform me, that he had found them both killed, and wished to know my further orders; I sent the cart and oxen, had them brought in and buried; they had been shot with two balls, scalped and cut in the most shocking manner.

"Late in the evening of the 4th inst. old Joseph Lenar and between 30 and 40 Indians arrived from the Prophet's town, with a white flag; among whom were about ten women, and the men were composed of the chiefs of the different tribes that compose the Prophet's party. A Shawanoe man, that spoke good English, informed me that old Lenar intended to speak to me next morning, and try to get something to eat.

"At retreat beating I examined the men's arms and found them all in good order, and completed their cartridges to 16 rounds per man. As I had not been able to mount a guard of more than six privates and two non-commissioned officers, for some time past, and sometimes part of them every other day from the unhealthiness of the company, I had not conceived my force adequate to the defense of this post should it be vigorously attacked, for some time past.

Historically speaking

Clark retired as The Tribune-Star women's editor in 1980. She has written a local history column for 30 years. She is Vigo County Historian.

By Dorothy J. Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

"As I had just recovered from a very severe attack of the fever, I was not able to be up much through the night. After tattoo, I cautioned the guard to be vigilant, and ordered one of the non-commissioned officers, as the sentinels could not see every part of the garrison, to walk around on the inside during the whole night to prevent Indians taking advantage of us provided they had any intention of attacking us.

"About 11 o'clock I was awakened by the firing of one of the sentinels. I sprang up, run out and ordered the men to their posts, when my orderly sergeant (who had charge of the upper block-house) called out that the Indians had fired the lower block-house, which contained the property of the contractor which was deposited in the lower part, the upper having been assigned to a corporal and ten privates as an alarm post. The guns had began to fire pretty smartly from both sides.

"I directed the buckets to be got ready and water brought from the well and the fire extinguished immediately, as it was perceivable at that time. But from debility or some other cause, the men were very slow in executing my orders. The word fire seemed to throw the whole of them in confusion, and by the time they had got the water and broken open the door the fire had unfortunately communicated to a quantity of whiskey (the stock having licked several holes through the lower part of the building after the salt that was stored there through which they had introduced the fire without being discovered, as the night was very dark), and in spite of every exertion we could make use of, in less than a moment it ascended to the roof and baffled every effort we could make to extinguish it.

"As that blockhouse adjoined the barracks that made part of the fortifications, most of the men immediately gave themselves up for lost, and I had the greatest difficulty in getting my orders executed; and, sir, what from the raging of the fire, the yelling and howling of several hundred Indians, the cries of nine women and children (a part soldiers' and a part citizens' wives, who had taken shelter in the fort), and the desponding of so many of the men, which was worse than all, I can assure you that my feelings were very unpleasant, and indeed there were not more than 10 or 15 men able to do a great deal, the others being either sick or convalescent, and to add to our other misfortunes, two of the stoutest men in the fort, and that I had every confidence in, jumped the picket and left us.

"But my presence of mind did not for a moment forsake me. I saw that by throwing off part of the roof that joined the blockhouse that was on fire, and keeping the end perfectly wet, the whole row of buildings might be saved, and leave only an entrance of 18 or 20 feet for the Indians to enter after the house was consumed; and that a temporary breastwork might be erected to prevent their even entering there. I convinced the men that this could be accomplished, and it appeared to inspire them with new life, and never did men act with more firmness or desperation.

Community Affairs File
Vigo County Public Library
REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

"Those that were able (while the others kept up a constant fire from the other blockhouse and the two bastions) mounted the roofs of the houses, with Dr. Clark at their head (who acted with the greatest firmness and presence of mind the whole time the attack lasted, which was seven hours) under a shower of bullets, and in less than a moment thew off as much of the roof as was necessary. This was done only with the loss of one man and two wounded, and I am in hopes neither of them dangerous. The man that was killed was a little deranged, and did not get off the house as soon as directed, or he would not have been hurt; and, although the barracks were several times in a blaze, and an immense quantity of fire against them, the men used such exertion that they kept it under and before day raised a temporary breastwork as high as a man's head, although the Indians continued to pour in a heavy fire of ball and innumerable quantity of arrows during the whole time the attack lasted, in every part of the parade.

"I had but one other man killed, nor any other wounded inside the fort, and he lost his life by being too anxious. He got into one of the galleys on the bastions and fired over the pickets, and called out to his comrades that he had killed an Indian, and neglecting to stoop down in an instant he was shot dead. One of the men that jumped the pickets returned an hour before day, and running up towards the gate begged for God's sake for it to be opened. I suspected it to be a stratagem of the Indians to get in, as I did not recollect his voice. I directed the men in the bastion, where I happened to be, to shoot him let him be who he would, but fortunately he ran up to the other bastion, where they knew his voice, and Dr. Clark directed him to lie close to the pickets behind an empty barrel that happened to be there, and at daylight I had him let in. His arm was broke in a most shocking manner, which he says was done by the Indians which I suppose was the cause of his returning. I think it probable that he will not recover.

"The other they caught about 130 yards from the garrison and cut him all to pieces. After keeping up a constant fire until six o'clock the next morning, which we began to return with some effect after daylight, they removed out of the reach of our guns. A party of them drove up the horses that belonged to the citizens here, and as they could not very rapidly shot the whole of them in our sight, as well as a number of their hogs. They drove off the whole of the cattle, which amounted to 65 head, as well as the public oxen.

"I had the vacancy filled up before night (which was made by the burning of the blockhouse) with a strong row of pickets, which I got by pulling down the guard house. We lost the whole of our provisions, but must make out to live upon green corn until we can get a supply, which I am in hopes will not be long.

"I believe the whole of the Miamies or Weas were among the Prophet's party, as one chief gave his orders in that language which resembled Stone Easter's voice, and I believe Negro Legs was there likewise. A Frenchman here understands their different languages, and several of the Miamies or Weas that have been here frequently were recognized by the Frenchman and soldiers next morning. The Indians suffered smartly, but were so numerous as to take off all that were shot. They continued with us until the next morning, but made no further attempt on the Fort, nor have we seen anything more of them since. I have delayed informing you of my situation, as I did not like to weaken the garrison, and I looked for some person from Vincennes, and none of my men were acquainted with the woods, and therefore I would either have to take the river or the road, which I was fearful was guarded by small parties of Indians that would not dare attack a party of rangers that was on a scout; but being disappointed, I have at length determined to send a couple of my men by water and am in hopes that they will arrive safe.

"I think it would be best to send the provisions under a pretty strong escort, as the Indians may attempt to prevent their coming. If you carry on an expedition against the Prophet this fall, you ought to be well provided with everything, as you may calculate on having every inch of ground disputed between this and there that they can defend with advantage. Wishing, &c. (signed) Z. Taylor ... to His Excellency Governor Harrison."